



the CommonHealth Compass

Metabolism Makeover

Ever wondered why it seems one person can eat anything they want and not gain a pound, while another person's every indulgence shows up on the scale? It's because of differences in metabolism, muscle mass and physical activity.



Metabolism is the body's process of converting food into energy that we need to survive and function on a day to day basis. This energy is used to stay warm, move around and keep vital organs functioning. A

faster metabolism uses energy (calories) quickly, while a slower metabolism uses less energy to keep the body running.

Knowing that, it's tempting to throw up our hands and blame weight issues on a slow metabolism. But that's not the end of the story. There are many factors that we can control. Join CommonHealth to learn more about boosting your metabolism and maintaining a healthy weight.



RECIPE

Black Bean & Salmon Tostadas

Pickled jalapeños, cilantro and avocado perk up convenient canned salmon for a quick tostada topping. Skip store-bought and make your own crispy shells in the oven. Serve with: Brown rice cooked with diced tomatoes and onions or salsa.

Cook: 25 min. | Ready In: 25 min.



Ingredients

- 8 6-inch corn tortillas
- Canola oil cooking spray
- One 6- to 7-ounce can boneless, skinless wild Alaskan salmon, drained
- One avocado, diced
- 2 tablespoons minced pickled jalapeños, plus 2 tablespoons pickling juice from the jar, divided
- 2 cups coleslaw mix (see Tip) or shredded cabbage
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- One 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed
- 3 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream
- 2 tablespoons prepared salsa
- 2 scallions, chopped
- Lime wedges (optional)

Directions

1. Position racks in upper and lower thirds of the oven; preheat to 375°F.
2. Coat tortillas on both sides with cooking spray. Place on 2 baking sheets. Bake, turning once, until light brown, 12 to 14 minutes.
3. Combine salmon, avocado and jalapenos in a bowl. Combine cabbage, cilantro and the pickling juice in another bowl. Process black beans, sour cream, salsa and scallions in a food processor until smooth. Transfer to a microwave-safe bowl. Cover and microwave on High until hot, about 2 minutes.
4. To assemble tostadas, spread each tortilla with some bean mixture and some salmon mixture and top with the cabbage salad. Serve with lime wedges, if desired.

Kitchen tip: Look for convenient preshredded cabbage-and-carrot "coleslaw mix" near other prepared vegetables in the produce section of the supermarket.

Cut Down on Dishes: A rimmed baking sheet is great for everything from roasting to catching accidental drips and spills. For effortless cleanup and to keep your baking sheets in tip-top shape, line them with a layer of foil before each use

Recipe By: EatingWell Test Kitchen, <http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/249998/black-bean-salmon-tostadas/print/>



Power Up with Breakfast

Breakfast gives you energy to start the day. A healthy breakfast is important for everyone. Get the morning nutrition you need with these quick breakfast ideas.

- Make instant oatmeal with fat-free or low-fat milk instead of water. Toss in raisins or dried cranberries and chopped walnuts. Or mix in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened applesauce and sprinkle with apple pie spice or cinnamon.
- Layer fat-free or low-fat plain yogurt with your favorite crunchy cereal and blueberries.
- Blend a breakfast smoothie with low-fat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana.
- Top a toaster waffle with fat-free or low-fat yogurt and peach slices.
- Stuff a whole-wheat pita with a sliced, hard-cooked egg and low-fat shredded cheese.
- Spread peanut butter on a whole-wheat tortilla. Add a peeled, whole banana and roll it up.
- Spread low-fat cream cheese on a whole-grain toasted bagel. Top with sliced strawberries.
- Add lean ham and low-fat Swiss cheese to a toasted whole-grain English muffin.

If your taste buds just don't crave breakfast foods, try these:

- Leftover veggie pizza.
- Deli turkey, a slice of low-fat cheese and lettuce wrapped in a tortilla.
- Leftover quinoa or brown rice mixed with low-fat yogurt, dried fruit and nuts. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

RECIPE

Wintertime Cereal

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup wheat and barley nugget cereal
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup 100-percent bran cereal
- 2 teaspoons toasted sunflower seeds
- 2 teaspoons toasted almonds, sliced
- 1 tablespoon raisins
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bananas, sliced
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup raspberry or strawberry flavored low-fat yogurt

Directions

1. Mix the wheat and barley nugget cereal, bran cereal, sunflower seeds and almonds in a medium bowl. Add raisins, bananas and half of the strawberries.
2. Gently stir in the yogurt and divide between two bowls.
3. Scatter the remaining strawberries over the top and enjoy!

Nutritional Information

Serves: 2

Calories: 352; Total fat: 6g; Saturated fat: 1g; Carbohydrate: 69g; Sodium: 272mg; Fiber: 8g

Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Reviewed by Taylor Wolfram, MS, RDN, LDN

<http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/planning-and-prep/snack-and-meal-ideas/power-up-with-breakfast>

Weight Watchers Success Story

VDOT employee reaches health goals and feels great!

I wanted to drop you a line and let you know about my VERY successful weight loss using your program. I had been overweight since I was in high school thirty-five years ago. I had always wanted to lose weight and had tried many different “fad” diets with little to no results. I tried many types of diets and it not only made me unhealthy, I could never get past losing 20 or so pounds.

Two years ago I got sick with a virus that made my legs swell. Our family doctor couldn’t quite figure out what was wrong with me and I ended up in the hospital. Our family doctor and the doctors in the hospital stressed the need to lose weight and change my diet. When I was released from the hospital, our family doctor and I looked for new diet options.

I signed up for the Weight Watchers program and, because I am covered by the state’s health insurance plan, I would be reimbursed for half the cost of the program. So, off I went... with little expectation of Weight Watchers actually working for me. I had tried SO many other diets and fads in the past; I figured this would just be a waste of time yet again.

I downloaded the Weight Watchers program on my phone and off I went to the grocery store. Using the information from the app I changed things that I normally bought, making sure to look at sugar alcohol, saturated fats and protein through the Points Plus Program. Within a few days the weight started to come off. The swelling in my legs started to decrease and I started to feel SO much better! The weight came off steadily. I was amazed at how well Weight Watchers worked. In the back of my mind I was afraid of hitting the 20 pound loss mark and getting “stuck” as I always had with other diets. Within six weeks I had already passed the 20 pound mark and was still losing weight! After being let down so many times in the past, I was amazed. I didn’t have to eat like a bird to lose the weight either. I ate the same thing my family ate. Even with the occasional visit to a fast food restaurant, or eating out for special occasions, I ate the same things everyone else was eating..... and I kept losing the weight. I was empowered by my newfound knowledge and help from Weight Watchers and CommonHealth’s presentations at VDOT. I had set a goal of losing 75 pounds and it didn’t take a year for me to reach that



goal. I felt so much better after the initial loss that I decided to keep going and stick with it.

It’s been two years since I began this journey. I have accomplished an AMAZING loss of over 130 pounds and dropped 7 dress sizes, and I feel SO much better. Friday, September 29th was my 49th birthday and I had been debating whether to share my story. My husband told me because I am a very modest and down to earth person that, even after such a TREMENDOUS change, I think there is no story to tell. He said, “send them this picture and let them be the judge. Proof is in the pudding.”! So, I am writing to you to thank you for your help, Weight Watchers and CommonHealth, and to share my story!

We are so proud of Angela and thrilled that she shared her story with us! Each weight loss journey is different and whether you aim to lose 5 pounds or 25 + pounds, Weight Watchers is a tool available to all state employees at a special corporate rate. You can learn about CommonHealth at <http://commonhealth.virginia.gov/commonhealthvirginia.htm> and more about Weight Watchers and the reimbursement plan at <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/employeeprograms/weightwatchers>.

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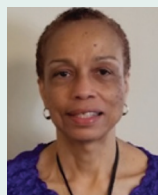
“Since I began this journey. I have accomplished an AMAZING loss of over 130 pounds and dropped 7 dress sizes, and I feel SO much better.”

Our 2017 Wellness Champions

A hearty congratulations to the four honorees of the CommonHealth Wellness Champion Awards! The Wellness Champion Award recognizes an employee who models a healthy lifestyle, has made significant changes in health behaviors, motivates others to make health improvements, or has implemented a policy to help create a positive wellness culture for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each of this year's winners has made their workplace better through their efforts. They were awarded a certificate from the Governor, a CommonHealth Goodie Bag, and will be featured on the [CommonHealth Website](#).

Meet the Winners

Brenda Clarke
Virginia Department of Social Services



"Being active contributes to my well-being (spiritually, financially, socially, emotionally, & physically). It's a big part of my prescription for victory in life."

Valerie A. Lee
Mountain Empire Community College



"Since December 16, 2014, I have lost 73 pounds. More importantly, I have adopted a lifestyle change that will take me into my later years in life. I always say the Lord provided my motivation, and Weight Watchers gave me the tools."

Chuck Thomas
Tidewater Community College



"Twenty-nine years of recreation, health, and fitness industry experience has given me the unique opportunity to live, work, and play with my life's passion."

Connie Merriman
Old Dominion University



"I learned many years ago the connection between physical health and emotional health – you really can't have one without the other. I believe the best 'tool' for maintaining good physical AND emotional health is walking."

Who inspires your agency to get up and moving? Who motivates your office to live life to the fullest? Is there someone that advocates for a healthier lifestyle? [Let us know about the Champions](#) in your workplace that make it a healthier place to be.



Family Corner

Looking to break up the short days of winter and get out and about with the family? Plan a trip to one of Virginia's indoor family fun spots. Whether your family enjoys hands-on museums, laser tag, rock climbing, or splashing at a water park, Virginia has many options for indoor fun in your region. Check out this [list of ideas](#) from the [Virginia is for Lovers](#) blog and plan your trip today. Be sure to let the whole family know about your plans so that everyone has something to look forward to!

If your budget is dictating that you spend more time at home this winter, check out the [Day By Day Literacy Calendar](#) from the Library of Virginia which has expanded to offer a ["Be Healthy"](#) tab. Topics and activities include everything from indoor exercises, to having the whole family be prepared in an emergency, to getting enough rest. Try something new that will help your kids establish healthier behaviors this winter that will last a lifetime.